

Impacts to other forms of aquatic life that may be caused by this introduction? None___ Minor__x___ Major

Comments:

(See Above)

Potential for the proposed new species to reproduce in this location? None___ Minor__x___ Major

Comments:

Highly unlikely. The bottom of the pond looked to be mostly dirt and cobble. Neither the inlet or outlet had anything that could serve as a spawning area.

If necessary, would it be feasible to remove this species after it has been stocked?

Yes. The pond could not be emptied due to its proximity to the West Fork and thus a shallow water table. Inflow and outflow, however, could be cut off, and the water level could probably be dramatically reduced, which would make removal feasible.

Would this introduction result in impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?

There are numerous such ponds in the Bitterroot Valley, and the cumulative effects are unknown.

Describe reasonable and prudent alternatives to this action, if any (including no action).

This private fish pond license involves the stocking of fish. The application is for rainbow trout.

A. Alternatives would include stocking different species:

Three (3) potential alternative trout species are:

1. Brook trout - not presently allowed by MFWP policy.
2. Brown trout - also exist in the West Fork drainage but are highly predaceous.
3. Westslope cutthroat trout - The westslope cutthroat that are commercially available do not originate from the

Bitterroot and have a different genetic makeup than Bitterroot fish, so they would not be an advisable choice.

B. No action. The nearby West Fork Bitterroot River already has a good population of rainbow trout. There is no reason to believe that the stocking of rainbows in this pond would have any adverse impact on this population, so a no action alternative would serve no purpose.

Describe and evaluate mitigation, stipulations, or other control measures enforceable by the agency, if any.

Current laws regarding the transfer of live fish from one water body to another govern the legality of movement of fish planted in this pond to other waters. This movement of fish to other waters would be enforceable under this regulation.

List any other agencies or individuals that may be affected by the proposed introduction:

none

List all agencies and individuals who have been notified of this proposed introduction:

none

Based on this evaluation, is an EIS required? Yes/No If no, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for the proposed action.

No. The proposed action occurs on private lands. This issue can be handled at the EA level.

EA prepared by Larry Javorsky—acting Fisheries Biologist 06/30/00

Comments will be accepted until July 30, 2000

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